

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please replace the pending claims with the following amended claims set.

1.-12. (Canceled)

13. (Previously presented) A method for down-regulating the expression of a gene of interest in *C. elegans*, comprising

feeding *C. elegans* with a micro-organism that expresses dsRNA corresponding to the gene of interest, wherein said microorganism comprises an expression vector that comprises a DNA sequence corresponding to the gene of interest, in which said expression vector comprises a promoter or promoters flanking said DNA sequence such that the promoter or promoters initiate transcription of said DNA sequence to produce double stranded RNA upon binding of a transcription factor to said promoter or promoters, and

wherein upon production of the dsRNA by the microorganism, the expression of the gene of interest is downregulated.

14.-16. (Canceled)

17. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 13, in which said expression vector comprises two identical promoters flanking said DNA sequence.

18. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 13, in which said expression vector comprises said DNA sequence in a sense and an antisense orientation relative to said promoter or promoters.

19. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 13, in which said transcription factor is a phage polymerase.

20. (Currently amended) A method according to claim 19, in which said promoter(s) is/are ~~selected from the group consisting of T7, T3 and SP6~~ promoter(s).

21. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 13, in which said micro-organism is adapted to express said transcription factor.

22. (Original) A method according to claim 21, in which said transcription factor is T7 polymerase.

23.-24. (Canceled)

25. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 13, in which the micro-organism is a bacterium.

26. (Original) A method according to claim 25, in which the bacterium is *E. coli*.

27. (Original) A method according to claim 26, in which the *E. coli* is a RNase III negative strain.

28.-53. (Canceled)

54. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 13, wherein said promoter or promoters are T7 promoters.

55. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 13, wherein said promoter or promoters are tissue-specific promoters.

56. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 13, wherein the micro-organism is a yeast cell.